

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON TUESDAY 30 OCTOBER 2007**

Present: Councillor R. Burnip (Chair)  
Councillors Mrs. A.E. Laing, T.  
Longstaff, Mrs. S. Mason, D.  
Milsom and T. Unsworth

Also Present: Councillor J. Freak - Executive Member for Social Inclusion  
and Culture

Apologies: Councillor C. Patching, Mrs. J.  
Maslin, P. Campbell and B. Burn

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 9 October 2007 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE** held on 16 October 2007 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the information contained within the Minutes, be noted.

3. **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

4. **FEEDBACK FROM SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

At the last meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on 22 October 2007 the following issues were discussed.

- \* Green Waste Recycling Scheme
- \* Gender Disability Equality Scheme

The Chair referred to the recycling depots at Thornley Station and Coxhoe and suggested that a visit to view the operations be arranged.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (i) the information given be noted;
- (ii) a visit to view the operations at Thornley Station and Coxhoe recycling depots be arranged.

5. **SERVICE UNIT PERFORMANCE REPORTING - LEISURE CENTRE PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Senior Cultural Development Officer which provided Members with a position statement on the operation of the Leisure Centres under the partnership arrangements with Leisure Connection Limited, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

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P. Irwin explained that monthly monitoring meetings were held with Leisure Connection staff and the Senior Cultural Development Officer to ensure smooth operation of the partnership. In addition, quarterly inspections were undertaken by the Health and Safety Manager to ensure the Centres were managed in accordance with Health and Safety legislation.

As part of the Council's summer 'schools out' programme, a comprehensive range of swimming opportunities were developed in partnership with Leisure Connection, Everyday Swim and County Durham Primary Care Trust. The programme provided a mix of free swimming sessions and structured classes including snorkelling, aqua circuits, mini polo and junior lifesaving. A total of 5,671 young people had attended the sessions and as part of the evaluation of the scheme, positive comments were received from both parents and children.

To date, a total of 4,371 leisure saver cards had been issued, attracting a total of 12,304 visits to the Centres. A breakdown of the age categories of the cards issued were detailed in the report.

The Council continued to work with the Company to attract major sporting events into the District and on 12 October 2007, a live sky sports boxing championship event was held at Peterlee Leisure Centre. It was intended to work in partnership to attract further events of regional and national significance to the District.

The six monthly review of the performance indicators developed with Leisure Connections were detailed in Appendix 1 together with the complaints summary shown at Appendix 2.

M. Grinstead, Manager of Peterlee and Seaham Leisure Centres circulated the six monthly review from 1st April 2007 to 30th September 2007. It was explained that the annual plan was a partnership document developed and agreed between the Council, Leisure in the Community Limited and Leisure Connection Limited covering a period of 12 months from April to March each year. The plan included a summary of the previous 12 months performance, together with key performance indicators to be achieved over the following year. The annual plan was monitored on a quarterly basis and this was the second six monthly review.

The quarterly review detailed notable achievements and areas for improvement during the next 3 months. Leisure Connection worked in partnership with the Easington Sports Development Team to provide free access to leisure centres for sports development activities from Monday to Friday, 9am until 3pm. A Young Peoples Forum had been established which met every 3 months where ideas to improve facilities and services were discussed.

M. Grinstead referred to Seaham Leisure Centre and explained that through partnership working with East Durham United, which provided neighbourhood football, more people were using the Centres.

The Chair referred to the financial information and queried if the figures had risen since Leisure Connection had taken over from the District Council. M. Grinstead explained that there had been significant growth since Leisure Connection had taken over the running of the Leisure Centres.

The Chair referred to the 'Healthworks' Centre at Easington Colliery and explained that they had a partnership with the local school to use the fitness

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facilities as part of their curriculum. M. Grinstead explained that the most difficult thing was transport and the cost of transport. They did not have the benefit of being next to a school. The Leisure Centre had been providing booster swimming for some schools which had been organised by the School Sports Partnership. Northlea School used the gym at Seaham Leisure Centre.

A Member queried if there were any other large scale events such as the sky boxing arranged for the future. M. Grinstead explained that it was very difficult to attract events that had TV coverage but they did attract some good regional events.

A Member referred to the cleanliness of the bar in Peterlee Leisure Centre. M. Grinstead explained that the bar was closed two years ago and had been neglected but they were embarking on a refurbishment programme and would take the comments on board.

A Member referred to the Get Active Team in Seaham and explained that she had fought with the GP for a referral onto it. P. Irwin explained that the Get Active Team was managed by the Primary Care Trust and they worked with GP's who did not engage with the service. Some GP's had been concerned regarding Health and Safety issues but the PCT were trying to overcome this problem.

The Chair referred to the concern raised at the site visits in August regarding the signposting to the Leisure Centres. P. Irwin explained that he was aware of the lack of signposting and they were looking to fund some blue signs and were liaising with the Highway Section.

The Chair thanked P. Irwin and M. Grinstead for their report.

**RESOLVED** that the information given be noted.

JC/CB/COM/CSSC/071100

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